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Subject: Sierra Club: Despite Cooper's Permit Approval, Fracked Gas Pipeline Will Continue to be Fought at Every Turn

[Sierra Club: Despite Cooper's Permit Approval, Fracked Gas Pipeline Will Continue to be Fought at Every Turn](#)

Today, Governor Roy Cooper's Department of Environmental Quality approved a water permit that would allow the proposed fracked gas Atlantic Coast Pipeline to be constructed in the state. The water permit ("401 permit") is the main input states have into federally controlled projects such as the Atlantic Coast Pipeline.

The complete pipeline would run from West Virginia, cutting through Virginia, as it brings fracked gas to North Carolina's southern border. The project, which has faced significant opposition, would disproportionately affect low-income and communities of color along its route and would threaten pristine forests and waterways. In addition, increased reliance on fracked gas would harm public health and exacerbate climate change.

Today's issuance of the permit follows a protracted delay in which the Cooper administration requested additional information from the companies no less than five times. The permit itself addresses water quality impacts only, not other concerns about the pipeline, including climate and energy impacts.

As proposed, the Atlantic Coast Pipeline would run over 600 miles across pristine forests, scenic lands, private properties, and more than 320 waterways as it delivers fracked gas from the Marcellus Shale from West Virginia through Virginia and North Carolina.

Last month, the Virginia State Water Control Board voted 4-3 to approve a 401 permit for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline, but postponed its effectiveness until important studies are complete. The Sierra Club and its partners have filed suit over that approval, and have also filed legal challenges to decisions by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Park Service. The Sierra Club is currently party to four lawsuits challenging the pipeline.

In response, Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune released the following statement:

"Regardless of the rhetoric coming from fracked gas companies today, the Atlantic Coast Pipeline will continue to encounter massive opposition at every turn. Duke Energy and Dominion Power can spend millions on their PR campaigns attempting to convince the public they're pushing clean energy, but the truth remains that fracked gas and this pipeline are a direct threat to the climate and to communities.

"We're disappointed by Governor Roy Cooper's approval of this fracked gas pipeline water permit, which makes his commitment to clean energy harder to fulfill. Fracked gas is just another fossil fuel that threatens our water, our health, and our climate.

"The Sierra Club and communities will not back down. From West Virginia to North Carolina, we will continue to fight the Atlantic Coast Pipeline in the streets and in the courts, ensuring that this dirty and dangerous project never gets built."

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